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SUBJECT: ICELAND: PRIME MINISTER CONGRATULATES PRESIDENT-ELECT  
OBAMA

REF: STATE 118192

¶1. (U) Icelandic Prime Minister Geir Haarde has sent U.S. President-elect Barack Obama a letter of congratulations, according to a November 5 press release from the PM's Office. In the release, Haarde further noted that he looks forward to meeting the new President at the next NATO Summit in 2009 and that Obama's election will strengthen the image of the U.S. as one of the world's leading democracies. Text of release follows para. 2.

¶2. (U) Text of Press Release (unofficial embassy translation):

The Prime Minister's Congratulations to Barack Obama

11/05/2008

"I wish Barack Obama congratulations on his historic victory in the U.S. Presidential Election. Voter turnout in the elections is indicative of the high level of public interest and the call for change," says Prime Minister Geir H. Haarde.

"Obama has won this impressive victory based on his personal virtues and the issues he has emphasized. I look forward to meeting him in areas of common national interest, such as at the next NATO Summit, and expect that the good relations between Iceland and the United States will only improve as he comes into the White House. It is evident that the image of the United States as one of the world's leading democratic nations will only be strengthened with his election," says Geir Haarde.

The Prime Minister has sent the following congratulatory letter:

[Letter in English]

Dear President-Elect Obama,

I have the pleasure of conveying to you the warm congratulations of the Government of Iceland on your election as President of the United States of America. Your abilities and experience will benefit this great office and the American people and inspire democracies around the world.

I look forward to working with you in strengthening the long-standing friendship and cooperation between Iceland and the United States, as well as in meeting international challenges of common concern.

Sincerely,  
Geir H. Haarde,  
Prime Minister.

Reykjavk 5. nsvember 2008

End text of press release.

VAN VOORST